



March 30, 2023

Senator Melissa Wiklund
Chair, Health & Human Services Committee
Room 1100, Minnesota Senate Building
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Wiklund and Members of the Committee:

Minnesota's Prenatal to Three Coalition (PN-3) is excited to support SF 2995 A2 Amendment, to invest in Minnesota's children and families. Families are struggling to meet daily expenses and challenges, many of the investments in SF 2995 A2 will help families with young children have a great start, regardless of race, zip code or income level. The PN-3 Coalition would like to highlight key provisions that are necessary to improve the health and wellbeing of young children, birthing people, and families.

Family, Friend, and Neighbor Grant Program A.13. 1. Sec. 12 & Line 428.4

Funding for family Friend and Neighbor (FFN) care grants will allow federally funded programs to continue statewide and complement the care provided by licensed homes and centers. FFN providers often serve families who need care for 2nd and 3rd shifts, want culturally specific care, and/or provide care to children with disabilities.

Community Solutions for Health Child Development A.13 Sec.18 & Line 433.18

Allowing communities of color and communities experiencing geographic inequities to identify their needs and challenges related to maternal and child health provides opportunities to develop locally driven solutions to help address maternal and child inequities. We are pleased to see this program continue to receive support.

Maternal and Child Health Equity

We are pleased to see funding for the **Supporting Healthy Development of Babies Grant Program** in (Article 4 Sec. 39) and the **Equitable Health Care Task Force** (Article 4 Sec. 81) work to reduce health inequities for birthing persons and children.

Doula Services A.1. Sec. 33 & Line 49.10 & Sec. 17 Subd. 28b & Line 20.15

Doulas are proven to lower racial disparities in healthcare by improving health outcomes, increasing breastfeeding rates, reducing childbirth complications, and reestablishing the relationship between historically marginalized communities and the medical establishment. Both provisions help reduce barriers to serving families on Medicaid and improve birth outcomes.

Healthy Beginnings, Healthy Families Act A. 4 Sec. 53 & Line 182.12

Expanding the Healthy Start Act to county jails improves the health outcomes of justice involved families and helps stabilize and improves parent-child attachment.

Early Childhood Care, Education & Workforce A. 13 Sec. 25 & Line 442.5; Article 14

These historic investments in early care and learning is critical to maintaining the field and supporting families who need access to care. The entire community benefits when parents can work, and businesses have workers.

988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline A. 4 Sec. 47 & Line 174.1

Expanding the capacity of Minnesota's crisis response is critical to meet the mental health needs of our communities and will increase factors that promote resilience by increasing access to immediate care and mental health support.

Children's Mental Health Supports A. 9 Section 3 & Beginning on Line 358.28

We support increased access to infant and early childhood consultation services. These programs and resources help families mitigate mental health challenges for our youngest children and provide those working with families and young children with the skills and tools to provide ongoing supports. Please consider adding policies changes that would allow for increased access in currently funded programs and consider funding to keep families intact.

Home Visiting for Priority Populations Line 1204, Budget Spreadsheet

Expanding funding for family home visiting programs will help improve maternal and child outcomes, address the mental health needs of both parents and their children whilst providing housing, food, and employment support. We are particularly pleased to see funding will target priority populations that aren't currently served through family home visiting programs.

Funding for Help Me Connect Line 1200, Budget Spreadsheet

Much work has been done over the past several years to educate families and providers about this important tool. Investing in this resource will help families across the state and we encourage the committee to add this to your final bill.

Department of Children, Youth, and Families A. 13 Sec. 14 & Line 429.18

The PN-3 Coalition believes that quality investment in young children and families includes establishing the infrastructure and system needed to support public services and programs. This will not only ease the burden on other state agencies facing capacity issues but provide families in Minnesota with a holistic opportunity to create a full-service care continuum that supports families and their children from birth through their most critical developmental years.

Thank you,

Deb Fitzpatrick,
Children's Defense Funds-MN,
Co-Chair

Nancy Jost,
West Central Initiative,
Co-Chair

Laura LaCroix-Dalluhn,
MN Prenatal to Three (PN-3) Coalition,
Coalition Coordinator